

# FACT SHEET



## **Iowa City Former Manufactured Gas Plant**

**Iowa City, Iowa**

**March 2000**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) continues to oversee field activities at the Iowa City Former Manufactured Gas Plant site, 505 Burlington Street, Iowa City, Iowa. MidAmerican Energy Company plans to begin additional field work at the site the week of March 13, 2000.

In September 1999, MidAmerican Energy sampled air in the crawlspace of the Iowa-Illinois Manor apartment building and near a vent system on the exterior of the building. The soil, ground water, and sediment in storm sewers at the site also were sampled. This field work was conducted to determine the nature and extent of coal tar contamination at the site, as required by the Administrative Order on Consent (AOC).

A review of the data gathered from the September 1999 sampling event shows that the extent of the contamination was not defined. Contamination was found in ground water monitoring wells southwest of the site, which was not anticipated during the planning for the September 1999 investigation. Therefore, additional data will be collected by MidAmerican Energy to determine the extent of the contamination.

### **ADDITIONAL FIELD WORK**

MidAmerican Energy will begin installing several monitoring wells west-southwest of the Iowa-Illinois Manor apartment building on the west side of Van Buren Street the week of March 13, 2000. Trucks with drilling equipment will be present in this area for several days. The new wells will be sampled later in the month.

Additional air sampling for polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) will also be conducted in the crawlspace of the Iowa-Illinois Manor apartment building. Air samples will be collected over a 24-hour period. The air in the crawlspace was sampled in September 1999, however, due to technical difficulties at the laboratory during the analyses of the air samples, it is necessary to collect these samples again.

The sample data will be used to determine the extent of the contamination at the site. After this goal is met, an assessment will be made of the threat the contamination may pose to human health and the environment.

## **SITE BACKGROUND**

From 1910 to 1939, gas was manufactured at a plant located on the southeast corner of Burlington and Van Buren Streets. Iowa City Light and Power Company operated the plant. In the 1940's, Iowa City Light and Power Company became the Iowa-Illinois Gas and Electric Company (now known as MidAmerican Energy Company), which maintained service facilities on the property until about 1971. In 1983, the Iowa-Illinois Manor apartment complex was built on the site.

When the gas was produced, by-products such as coal tar were also produced. Coal tar contaminants related to former manufactured gas plant operations, such as volatile organic compounds (VOCs), including benzene and toluene; metals, including lead, cyanide and arsenic; and polynuclear aromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs) have been identified in samples taken by EPA, both on and off site. Some compounds found in coal tar are hazardous substances that can cause health and environmental problems if handled improperly.

In March 1999, EPA, the MidAmerican Energy Company, and the Iowa-Illinois Manor Partnership, the owner of the apartment building at the site, reached an agreement, known as an Administrative Order on Consent or AOC. The AOC requires MidAmerican Energy to determine the nature and extent of coal tar contamination at the site and assess the threat to human health and the environment.

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Site-related documents are available to the public at the Iowa City Public Library, 123 S. Linn Street, Iowa City, Iowa. If you have questions about this fact sheet or need additional information, please contact:

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